

Office of Consumer and Family Affairs

Mission and Goals

- The mission of the Office of Consumer and Family Affairs (OCFA) is to promote inclusion and provide support to individuals receiving CSB services and their family members in their role as self-advocates, assuring that their interests are represented and their input is considered in all CSB planning and policy development.
- The goals of the OCFA are:
 - To provide a voice for individuals and family members through participation in executive management, strategic planning and policy development activities;
 - To assure that the voices of individuals and family members are heard and included in all major decisions pertaining to mental health, intellectual disability and substance abuse issues;
 - To serve as a liaison with consumer and family organizations establishing ongoing communication, disseminating information, and identifying major issues in the consumer community; and
 - To provide advocacy support to individuals filing a complaint of a human rights violation and assist in the resolution of complaints to the satisfaction of individuals and family members.

About Our Services

Peer Support Services – Certified Peer Specialists are available to meet with individuals in many of the CSB programs. A peer specialist has experience with mental health challenges in his or her own life, is now in stable recovery, and is trained to help others on their own journey to recovery. Peer specialists can meet with individuals or in a group for support and to help people develop their goals, communicate effectively with service providers, provide recovery information and connection with the recovery community.

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) Workshops – WRAP is a plan you create for yourself to take control over your own wellness. The Fairfax-Falls Church WRAP program serves all of Northern Virginia, helping people learn about tools and resources to help keep them well and feel better through difficult times. The free workshops consist of eight weekly 2-hour education classes. The WRAP program involves an educational and planning process that is grounded in mental health recovery concepts such as hope, education, empowerment, self-advocacy, and interpersonal support and connection.

Peer-Run Recovery, Employment and Drop-in Centers – There are five CSB-sponsored peer-run organizations in Fairfax. The recovery and drop-in centers are places where people with mental illness can stop by to enjoy a cup of coffee, socialize or just hang out in a low stress, low demand environment. The centers are staffed with volunteers as well as paid peer-staff who ensure a safe, comfortable and friendly atmosphere. People who come to the centers connect with (and find hope and inspiration from) a community of people in recovery. Peers encourage one another toward independence in housing, education and jobs. One of the five centers focuses on employment and training and another provides outreach and services to individuals in the homeless shelters, the detox center and other places where individuals might seek help with an addiction or substance dependency.

Certified Peer Specialist Training – A Certified Peer Specialist is a person in stable mental health recovery who shares their personal experience of their recovery journey to help others see the possibilities of having a self-determined, satisfying life. The Certified Peer Specialist training focuses on the principles and philosophy of recovery. The course facilitates learning by relating each session of the training encounter to the participants’ personal experience of recovery, and provides practice in the core skills of peer-to-peer support. The curriculum is presented within a three-part framework, which emphasizes principles of recovery and peer support; essential skills of peer support; and experiential group process. Training sessions are designed for participants to learn in a variety of ways, primarily through direct, personal experience, rather than by lecture.

Human Rights and Complaints – The programs of Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board operate according to the Virginia Human Rights Regulations (12VAC35-115). The regulations require providers of services to take specific actions to protect the rights of each individual. The regulations establish remedies when rights are violated or in dispute, and provide a structure for support of these rights. Questions or concerns not resolved directly with the service provider or program supervisor can be reported as a “formal complaint” to the Office of Consumer and Family Affairs for investigation and resolution. Advocates from the office are here to ensure that the rights of individuals in community programs are respected. A complaint made to these individuals is acted upon immediately.

Wellness Education Programs – The OCFA provides grant support to the local **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)** for Wellness Education programs. The grant supports presentations for the “In Our Own Voice” program and Peer-to-Peer and Family-to-Family courses.

For more information on services offered through the OCFA, contact:

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